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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1365
INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC 0549
RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUHQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4264
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2988
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 1634
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0281
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 1406
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7164
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0065
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 2120
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0087
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 3774
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1963

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 003775

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/RA, AND SCA/A (A/S BOUCHER, GASTRIGHT,DEUTSCH)
DEPT PASS AID/ANE, OPIC
DEPT PASS USTR FOR GERBER AND KLEIN
DEPT PASS OPIC FORZAHNISER
DEPT PASS TDA FOR STEIN AND GREENIP
CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, POLAD, JICENT
NSC FOR JWOOD
TREASURY FOR ABAUKOL, BDAHL, AND MNUGENT
MANILA PLEASE PASS ADB/USED
PARIS FOR OECD/ENERGY ATTACHE
OSD FOR SHIVERS, SHINN
COMMERCE FOR DEES, CHOPPIN, AND FONOVIDCH
TOKYO ALSO FOR AID COUNSELOR AANENSON

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958 N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EFIN](#) [EPET](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: AF: Afghan-Pakistani Bilateral Trade and Security Talks
Sponsored by Canadians

Sensitive but Unclassified

[¶](#)1. (SBU) Summary and Comment: US Embassy Kabul representatives attended the Afghanistan-Pakistan Cooperation Workshop, sponsored by the Canadian Government in Dubai, October 30 - November 1. Senior Afghan and Pakistani officials responsible for customs, immigration and border security spent three days identifying mutual areas of concerns and possible ways forward as well as building professional links. Operational-level workshops on these issues will be held in Kabul or Islamabad within the next four to six months to propose strategies for improving the legal movement of goods and people between the two countries, the maintenance of law and order, and countering narcotics. Embassy Kabul will continue to monitor and encourage this process. End Summary and Comment.

Encouraging Open Discussion

[¶](#)2. (SBU) US Embassy Kabul's Border Management Task Force (BMTF) Customs Advisor attended the Afghanistan-Pakistan Cooperation

Workshop in Dubai, October 30 through November 1, 2007, sponsored by the Canadian Government. The workshop aimed to further develop professional links between the responsible Afghan and Pakistani senior officials in a neutral setting, increase the level of mutual understanding of each nation's institutional arrangements, and identify and prioritize operational areas of mutual interest for ongoing joint management, capacity building and or cooperation by Afghanistan and Pakistan. These areas included customs controls, immigration trends and practices, law enforcement challenges, narcotics trafficking, terrorism threats, and economic issues in frontier areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

¶3. (SBU) Chaired by Jim Nickel, the Director South Asia Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade - Canada, the workshop was conducted in a spirit of cooperation among the Pakistani and Afghan delegations. In addition to the Pakistani and Afghan participants, two Canadian experts and an EmbOff participated in the discussions with observers from Germany and Japan (the outgoing and incoming Chair nations of the G8) and Canada also in attendance. Each delegation made various presentations on "cooperation" issues (as opposed to references to "border" issues that were removed at the request of the Afghan government) with subsequent clarifying discussions.

¶4. (SBU) Participants agreed to conduct a series of issue-specific, operational-level workshops in either Kabul or Islamabad (to be determined in the immediate future) as a first step. These are intended to further study high-priority areas of:

-- Connecting government to the people through social and economic development,

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-- Customs and Counter Narcotics, and

-- Managing the movement of people and Law Enforcement.

¶4. (SBU) Once concrete, cooperative operational-level initiatives are identified by the two governments, it was agreed another policy-level workshop at a third-country location (to be determined later) would meet to consider and recommend a course of action for implementation to their respective governments.

Blow by Blow

¶6. (SBU) After welcoming the Afghan and Pakistani delegations and stating the main objectives of the Workshop, the Chairman underscored that comments and statements made during the proceedings would not be attributed to any specific party and were non-binding. Following introductions, each Afghan and Pakistani official explained the institutional mandates of their particular agency and highlighted specific areas of interest. Through animated cross-table discussion, the broad areas of interest and concern that became the subjects for follow up operational meetings began to emerge.

¶6. (SBU) The second workshop day began with a presentation by one of the Canadian experts summarizing the general issues from the previous day's discussions. It was followed by a series of formal, detailed presentations by the Pakistani and Afghan delegations. In terms of reconstruction and rehabilitation, it was the consensus of the two delegations that the root cause of many of the threats from armed terrorist groups and narco-trafficking activities stem from the poverty of the frontier areas. Thus social and economic development was seen as crucial for addressing such issues as the legal movement of goods and people between the two countries, the maintenance of law and order, and countering narcotics. In order to have that development, it was also the consensus that the central governments should engage tribal elders to raise community awareness as a part of the consultative process common in the governance of the area.

¶7. (SBU) On customs controls, the delegations discussed the need for

efficient revenue collection, facilitation of trade, and strengthening enforcement efforts. The means discussed included creating partnerships between private business and customs authorities, strengthening inter-departmental coordination, and the need for compatibility of systems and operations (such as coordination of days and hours of operation, language, calendars and software. Discussions about the movement of people tended to repeat some of the points made earlier on the subject of economic development and customs controls. The delegations discussed the

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need for proper personal documentation and identification, the need to monitor the movement of people from one country to another, the implications of the traditional movement of tribal people, and Afghanistan's ability to absorb returning refugees.

¶19. (SBU) Discussions about law enforcement issues in general and counter narcotics activities in particular began with the recognition of the new security challenges in the "Post 9/11 World" such as the links between organized crime, narcotics trafficking, and terrorism. Presentations cited the need for effective equipment to deter and defeat well-equipped and heavily armed criminals operating in the region, the need to counter the over-riding influence of the narcotics industry (including the growing, harvesting, laboratories, precursor chemicals and transport aspects) on law enforcement and security in both nations, and the need for comprehensive drug supply and demand reduction programs. These presentations also included a reiteration of the tie between the lack of economic development in frontier areas and the growing influence of criminal and terrorist groups.

¶10. (SBU) The final day of the workshop involved the development of the "Road from Dubai" plan to build on the outcomes of the first two days of discussions and capitalize on the momentum of the workshop. The plan calls for a series of issue-specific, operational-level workshops to study and develop concrete measures to maximize the benefits of co-operation in areas of mutual interest. These meetings are intended to be held in Pakistan and Afghanistan and facilitated by Canada. After the completion of operational workshops, the Dubai participants would meet again in a third country, joined by representatives of the G8 partners and other potential donor states to consider suggested concrete measures and recommend courses of action regarding implementation to their respective governments.

Planning Ahead

¶11. (SBU) The participants agreed that plans emerging from the process be in keeping with the goals outlined in the recent 2007 Potsdam statement by the G8 foreign ministers, the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan as well as the goals of the August 2007 Peace Jirga. Planning for the follow up meetings emphasized the need for the two nations to move expeditiously to prepare for and convene the follow-on series of workshops within the next four to eight months. By taking that expeditious action and with support from Canada and its G8 partners, practical outcomes could then be implemented in a timely and meaningful manner.

¶12. (SBU) The subsequent declaration of a state of emergency in Pakistan has obvious implications for organizing the follow-on

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series of workshops, and the willingness of the Canadian Government to provide financial support. Given the great potential benefits to improving working level contacts between the two countries on these important cooperation issues including improved trade, the Embassy will encourage the Canadian Embassy Kabul to continue to support this process, which has started so well.

Wood

November 7, 2007

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